

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, NATO
SUBJECT: GERMAN PROPOSALS FOR REVISED MINISTERIAL MEETING FORMAT

REF: STATE 5066

1. TRANSMITTED BELOW IS A LETTER DATED FEBRUARY 11, 1974, FROM FRG PERMREP KRAPF TO LUNS AND NATO DELEGATIONS SETTING FORTH GERMAN PROPOSALS FOR REVISED MINISTERIAL FORMAL. KRAPF LETTER REFLECTS EARLIER GERMAN VIEWS AND ACCORDS WITH U.S. POSITION SET FORTH REFTEL. FRG LETTER WAS DISCUSSED IN THE NAC FEBRUARY 13.

2. BEGIN TEXT:

YOU WILL REMEMBER THAT I HAD SUGGESTED ALREADY BEFORE THE LAST MINISTERIAL MEETING THAT DISCUSSIONS SHOULD BE HELD ABOUT A NEW FORMAT FOR THE NATO MINISTERIAL MEETINGS.

UP TO THE PRESENT TIME, THE LONG, PREPARED STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS WHICH ARE NOT COORDINATED WITH EACH OTHER HAVE TAKEN UP THE LARGEST PART OF THE MEETINGS. THE GERMAN FOREIGN MINISTER IS OF THE OPINION THAT AN IMPROVED, MORE ACTIVE AND, CONFIDENTIAL

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ESPECIALLY, MORE EFFECTIVE FORM OF CONSULTATION SHOULD BE FOUND. WE WOULD THEREFORE CONSIDER IT DESIRABLE IF OPENING STATEMENTS COULD NORMALLY BE DISPENSED WITH AND IF MINISTERS DISCUSSED THE AGENDA ITEM BY ITEM.

MINISTER SHCEEL NOTED WITH SATISFACTION THAT, DURING THE LAST MINISTERIAL MEETING, THE DANISH FOREIGN MINISTER, TOO, SAID THAT THE PREPARED SPEECHES TOOK UP TOO MUCH TIME AND WERE THUS AN OBSTACLE TO A REAL DIALOGUE. YOU YOURSELF SUPPORTED THIS OBSERVATION BY THE DANISH FOREIGN MINISTER AND, AT THE MEETING OF THE PERMANENT COUNCIL ON 19 DECEMBER 1973, AGAIN EMPHASIZED THE NEED FOR A MORE FLEXIBLE FORMAT FOR THE NATO MINISTERIAL MEETINGS.

SINCE THE GERMAN FOREIGN MINISTER CONSIDERS THAT THE FORMAT OF THE MINISTERIAL MEETINGS IS ESSENTIAL FOR THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE CONSULTATIONS, HIS CONSIDERATIONS ON THIS POINT HAVE BEEN PUT FORWARD IN THE CAPITALS OF SOME OF OUR ALLIES. THE REACTION TO THIS INITIATIVE WAS OVERWHELMINGLY POSITIVE.

I SHOULD THEREFORE BE GRATEFUL IF THE FORMAT OF FUTURE MINISTERIAL MEETINGS COULD AGAIN BE DISCUSSED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, PERHAPS ALREADY UNDER ITEM III OF THE AGENDA OF THE COUNCIL MEETING OF 13 FEBRUARY 1974. THE PERMANENT COUNCIL SHOULD THEN, IN THE NEAR FUTURE, TAKE A DECISION ON THE NEW FORMAT OF THE MINISTERIAL MEETINGS SO THAT ALL THOSE CONCERNED CAN MAKE THE NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS IN TIME.

COPIES OF THIS LETTER HAVE BEEN SENT TO ALL MY COLLEAGUES ON THE COUNCIL.

END TEXT

MCAULIFFE

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